Total Rural hygiene and Sanitation

2408. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether to attain the targets set for total rural hygiene and sanitation, the Ministry of Rural Development has suggested amendment to Panchayati Raj Act to include a clause to make; only those with toilets in their dwellings, eligible to contest Panchayat polls;

(b) whether the Ministry has written to all Chief Ministers of the States to this effect; and

(c) whether Government has asked the States to prevail upon their employees including Anganwadi workers and also PDS shop-owners to build toilets in their dwellings or face severe consequences of pay/wage cut or cancellation of shop licenses?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI A. NARENDRA): (a) and (b) Minister, Rural Development has requested all Chief Ministers of the States to amend their State Panchayati Raj Acts to make it mandatory to construct household toilets by all the elected members of the Panchayati Raj Institutions, as already done in some States. This suggestion has been made with the intention of increasing rural sanitation coverage, which would lead to improved quality of life in rural areas.

(c) Government of India has requested the State Governments to encourage Government employees, including Anganwadi workers, and PDS shop-owners to construct household toilets. No suggestion has been made to take any penal action against any Government employee or fair price shop dealers in this regard.

Barren land in the country

†2409. SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA:

SHRI MOTILAL VORA:

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the total area of barren land that is estimated to be found in the country and the State-wise details thereof;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.